



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Willamette National Forest
Detroit Ranger District

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Mill City, OR 97360
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File Code: 1950
Date: July 15, 2002

Dear Members of the Public:

I am pleased to announce that the decision for the Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area (SRA) Environmental Assessment (EA) has been made and a copy of the Decision Notice / Finding of No Significant Impact (DN/FONSI) is enclosed. This decision establishes a Management Plan for the SRA and amends the Willamette National Forest Plan to include specific goals, standards, and guidelines for managing the SRA.

Y. Robert Iwamoto, Acting Forest Supervisor for the Willamette National Forest made the decision on June 26, 2002. We waited until now to notify the public of the decision so that we could first meet with the Opal Creek Advisory Council to inform them of the decision. The Opal Creek Advisory Council contributed a substantial amount of time and effort to prepare the proposed management plan, and we felt it was appropriate to personally present them with the final decision prior to notifying the public.

The decision does deviate somewhat from the proposed management plan developed by the Opal Creek Advisory Council. The enclosed Decision Notice provides a description of the selected action, the rationale for making that decision, and explains the differences between the proposed plan and the final decision. .

Due to the number of letters we received during the EA comment period from December 26, 2001 to January 25, 2002, I am not able to personally address your comments in this letter. However, in Appendix B of the enclosed DN/FONSI, I have included all of the comments received and my response to each of the comments. Copies of the letters are available for review in the Project Record.

This decision is subject to appeal by people or organizations who have provided comments or otherwise expressed interest in the selected alternative pursuant to 36 CFR 217. Any written appeal of this decision must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 217.9 and must include the reason for an appeal. A written appeal, in duplicate, must be postmarked and submitted to the following address: Appeal Deciding Officer, Regional Forester, Attn: 1570 Appeals, P.O. Box 3623, Portland, OR 97208-3623 within 45 days of July 15, 2002 which is the date that the legal public notice of this decision appears in the Eugene Register-Guard newspaper.

If you have any questions or would like to talk about this project, please contact Jim Romero, District Planner at 503-854-4212. This project is also available for review on the Willamette National Forest Web Page at www.fs.fed.us/r6/willamette. Thank you for your interest regarding this project.

Sincerely,

STEPHANIE PHILLIPS
District Ranger

